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Stanford hand Huskers their first loss

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New figures

Number of abortions in U.S. falls to lowest level since 1973

By David Crary
AP National Writer

NEW YORK — The number and rate of abortions across the United States have plunged to their lowest levels since the procedure became legal nationwide in 1973, according to new figures released Wednesday.

The report from the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports abortion rights, counted 862,000 abortions in the U.S. in 2017. That's down from 926,000 tallied in the group's previous report for 2014, and from just over 1 million counted for 2011.

Guttmacher is the only entity that strives to count all abortions in the U.S., making inquiries of individual providers. Federal data compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention excludes California, Maryland and New Hampshire because those states don't compile comprehensive abortion data for the CDC.

The new report illustrates that abortions are decreasing in all parts of the country — in Republican-controlled states seeking to restrict abortion access and in Democratic-run states protecting abortion rights. Between 2011 and 2017, abortion rates increased in only five states and the District of Columbia.

One reason for the decline in abortions is that fewer women are becoming pregnant. The Guttmacher Institute noted that the birth rate and the abortion rate declined during the years covered by the new report. A likely factor, the report said, is increased accessibility of contraception since 2011. The Affordable Care Act required most private health insurance plans to cover contraceptive services without out-of-pocket costs.

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Trump names hostage envoy O'Brien national security adviser

By Eric Tucker, Deb Riechmann and Darlene Superville
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Wednesday named Robert O'Brien, his chief hostage negotiator and an established figure in Republican policy circles, as his new national security adviser.

O'Brien, the fourth person in two years to hold the job, becomes the administration's point person on national security amid rising tensions with Iran following the weekend attack on Saudi oil installations and fresh uncertainty in Afghanistan after the halt in peace talks with the Taliban.

The announcement of O'Brien's selection comes a week after Trump ousted John Bolton from the post, citing policy disagreements. O'Brien, who made headlines in July when he was dispatched to Sweden to monitor the assault trial of American rapper A\$AP Rocky, was among five candidates Trump said Tuesday were under consideration.

"He's worked with me for quite awhile now on hostages and we have a tremendous track record on hostages," Trump said Wednesday on a tarmac in Los Angeles, hours after revealing the pick on Twitter. "Robert has been fantastic. We know each other well."

O'Brien, standing alongside Trump, said it was a "privilege" to be picked. "We've got a number of challenges," he said, adding that the administration's focus will continue to be on keeping the U.S. safe and rebuilding the military. He said he would advise Trump privately on the situation in Saudi Arabia.

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A community issue



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Speaking about early childhood education, Nancy Lim, program manager for early childhood success in the Institute for Youth, Education and Families at the National League of Cities, Wednesday morning at Central Community College's Grand Island campus discusses the four building blocks for an early learning community (at left). The building blocks are community leadership, commitment and public will; quality services that work for all young children and their families; neighborhoods where families can thrive; and policies that support and are responsive to families.

Community leaders come together to discuss early childhood

By Austin Koeller
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Education professionals and community leaders came together as part of a meeting on early childhood care and education on Wednesday morning.

Representatives from Central Community College, the Grand Island Public Library, Grand Island Public Schools, Grow Grand Island and local business people attended the meeting at Central Community College-Grand Island. Earlier this year, Grand Island was named one of six Nebraska communities that will work with the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education and Families, and the Nebraska Foundation for Children and Families on an "elite cohort" to address



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Nancy Lim, program manager for early childhood success in the Institute for Youth, Education and Families at the National League of Cities, speaks Wednesday morning at Central Community College's Grand Island campus.

issues of early childhood care, education and policy in each of these six communities.

Wood River, Gothenburg, Norfolk, Red

Cloud and Schuyler are also part of the cohort.

Nancy Lim, program manager for early childhood success in the Institute for Youth,

Education and Families at the National League of Cities, said the six Nebraska communities are six of just 21 communities across the country that are part of the NLC's initiative for early learning.

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Area officials listen as Nancy Lim, program manager for early childhood success in the Institute for Youth, Education and Families at the National League of Cities, speaks Wednesday morning at Central Community College's Grand Island campus.

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